Ever Onward, Never Backward

In the vast seas of dark fitnah, the mujahidin sail against the gloomy, crashing waves, depending on Allah against the tides until they arrive to the shores of safety. They only achieve this by abandoning the life of triviliaties and heathenism adopted by those mesmerized by the comforts of this worldly life. They are guided by the Allah Almighty to turn away, as their souls turn away from a life of humility and freefall to the abyss. They come to realize there is no safety except by running with their deen, and that it is only through their adherence to their deen can it be victorious.

They continue to ascend to the highest heights, to the peaks, living, coming, going, breathing, and nourishing their bodies through jihad, but are unlike any other! They are promised a reward for this, as they have enriched themselves with the best of sustenance. You see them kneeling, prostrating, crying, and supplicating. Their desire is to be accepted by Allah, and that He accepts their deeds. Their concern is to see all people as slaves to the Lord of all of creation, even if they have to spill their blood and souls for this purpose. To them, enslavement is a debt they owe Allah, and it is the highest achievement for any creature to attain.

Many are astonished by the condition of the mujahidin and their patience throughout all these years. They wonder at this greatness and honor, the likes of which has not been witnessed in this era! They whisper and they scream: Why do they not retreat? Why do they not stop? When will they surrender? And when will they settle and be drawn to life and its comforts?!

Will they be drawn when they are looking from the highest and loftiest of heights at falsehood in the far away abyss, filled with false, treacherous desires, and will their souls lean towards it? Will they weaken and fall into its valley? How could they do that when they seek success and safety in both realms?

The mujahidin know that a glance into that deep valley is the first step towards falling. Verily, a prey often falls victim to its predator because of glancing backwards too much. And an eye that sees too much, sends much to the heart. The fastest message to the heart is that which comes from the eye. Allah Almighty brought down to our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ this saying: "Do not let your eyes crave what We have allowed some of the kuffar to enjoy; the fleeting splendor of this worldly life, which We test them with" (Ta-Ha: 131). Ibn Kathir, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "The Almighty is saying to his Prophet Muhammad ﷺ : "Do not look at what these people of luxury and their likes and peers have of nice comforts. For it is only short-live splendor and a feeble bounty, which We are using to test them with. And very few of my servants are truly thankful." The Almighty also said: "And patiently stick with those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, seeking His pleasure. Do not let your eyes look beyond them, desiring the luxuries of this worldly life. And do not obey those whose hearts We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who follow only their desires and whose state is total loss" (Al-Kahf: 28). Because, after a glance, a heart starts to think and be fooled by the people of comfort whose hearts are filled with meaningless desires. Regarding this, Allah said: "Do not be deceived by the prosperity of the kuffar throughout the land. It is only a brief enjoyment. Then Hell will be their home—what an evil place to rest!" (Aal-i-Imran: 196-197). Qatadah said: "By Allah, they were not able to deceive the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, nor did he entrust any of Allah's matters to them, until Allah told him to do so."

Whenever people of falsehood attempt to attract the mujahid to take a glance at them, he hears the call of his faith saying: "How can you look when there are prisoners, widows, orphans and the weak awaiting your help, and wishing for your footsteps?" Yes, how is he to look and falter when there are those who wait to hear him utter Takbir, and listen out for the beat of his horses hooves?! How can he look, when the palms of the faithful are turned upwards, towards their Savior, every night, praying that their mujahid knight will show up to support the oppressed among Muslims? Those whom Allah urged us to fight for. The Almighty said: "And what is it with you? You do not fight in the cause of Allah and for oppressed men, women, and children who cry out, “Our Lord! Deliver us from this land of oppressors! Appoint for us a savior; appoint for us a helper—all by Your grace." (An-Nisa: 75).

How can a lofty mujahid even find time to glance or think about looking, when in front of him lurks an arrogant enemy, that spares no expense in fighting Islam and its people - an enemy that would annihilate a Muslim if he shows weakness, or would burn those false Muslims who show them friendliness, an enemy that will only be satisfied when a Muslim declares kufr in Allah and disavows His religion! Allah Almighty said: "Never will the Jews or Christians be pleased with you, until you follow their faith" (Al-Baqarah: 12). The Exalted also said: "And they will not stop fighting you until they turn you away from your faith—if they can" (Al-Baqarah: 217). They will not leave you alone until you obey their tawaghit and accept their falsehoods. On the other hand, the Crusader enemy turns to wailing as soon as the mujahid lifts his weapon and fights him in the cause of Allah Almighty, and the methodology of the Prophet ﷺ . His motto on his journey of jihad is: I will not look back, I will not back down even if all the idolaters on the planet stand in my way.

I will not look back when my goal is winning in this life and in the Akhirah. I will not look back when ahead of me lie my priorities: the Jannah of my Lord that I will earn through my Lord’s Qur'an. I will not look back when I can see the comforts of Jannah, the Hurr al-Ayn, the rivers, shades, silks, fountains, fresh springs, and its Great King.

I will not look back for I fear that fire and I will avoid making it my fate. In the Qur'an, I have seen the alleyways that lead to its chains, infernos, poisons, and roaring flames. All suffering of this worldly life is better for me than a tiny dip in the hellfire that wipes away the most pleasurable of worldly comforts.

The muwahhid brothers are the best of supports to the mujahid on his path - brothers whose hearts are filled with love of tawhid and jihad, brothers who have come to understand the true meaning of the bonds of iman, and the one body. For, they are the ropes – to the right and to the left - that hold them steadfast, after Allah. They are the eyes, ears, hands, and feet that come to their aid in times of difficulty. It is the brotherhood that takes root among mujahidin. It is the brotherhood that does not allow the mujahidin to forget to call out to those who have emerged from the sea of darkness but were overwhelmed by the path and stop midway! They say to them: Come on, return to the shores of salvation in the fields of jihad. Come back before you drown in that bottomless ocean. Come back and accept all the good that is coming to you before something stands between you and guidance. Come back before it is too late for regret.

This is the life of the mujahidin in the lands of jihad and iman. They proceed, looking ever onward, never backward. They advise, accept advice, and remind each other of what is good. With iman and steadfastness they follow the path to their Exalted Lord. Upward they go, not looking back, down the path of jihad and da'wah, deaf to the discouraging and demoralizing voices, guided only by the Book of their Lord and the methodology of their Prophet ﷺ. They abandon their own strength and might instead relying upon Allah's strength and might, asking Him for steadfastness. And Allah has full power and control over His Affairs, but most of men know not.